

Character Education

§ 115C-81.60. Character education.

(a) Each local board of education shall develop and implement character education instruction with input from the local community. The instruction shall be incorporated into the standard curriculum and should address the following traits:

- (1) **Courage.** – Having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't and the strength to follow your conscience rather than the crowd; and attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.
- (2) **Good judgment.** – Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities; thinking through the consequences of your actions; and basing decisions on practical wisdom and good sense.
- (3) **Integrity.** – Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and honest in all things; acting justly and honorably.
- (4) **Kindness.** – Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and treating others as you would like to be treated.
- (5) **Perseverance.** – Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; and exhibiting patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes, or failures.
- (6) **Respect.** – Showing high regard for authority, for other people, for self, for property, and for country; and understanding that all people have value as human beings.
- (7) **Responsibility.** – Being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties; showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct; being accountable for your own actions; and being committed to active involvement in your community.
- (8) **Self-discipline.** – Demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words, actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful substances and behaviors; and doing your best in all situations.

Policy Adherence

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Greene, the Chair of the Board, expressed concerns regarding the proliferation of negative messages through social media platforms concerning the school system and the board's actions. Greene highlighted what he referred to as a "propaganda campaign" on Facebook in response to recent personnel changes within the district. He emphasized that these rumors and biases are both misleading and intended to harm not only individuals but also the School Board of Education as an organization.

Additionally, Greene addressed rumors circulating regarding a recent public records request made by Avery County attorney Michaelle Poore on behalf of the county commissioners. In both cases, Greene defended the Board's integrity and actions. He explained that the personnel changes were made to better match the specific needs of the district with qualified individuals, detailing the rationale behind these decisions has been meticulously considered. Furthermore, Greene outlined the timeline for the Board's response to the public records request and assured the public of the system's swift and transparent response.

In conclusion, Greene emphasized the Board's commitment to serving the children of Avery County, underscoring that the system's primary focus remains on the well-being and education of the county's students.

[Minutes -September 5 2023 -ACBOE Meeting Open Agenda.pdf \(s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com\)](#)

- Based on the information provided, it appears that Chairman addressed in Public Statement for ~25 minutes in Sept 2024 Regular Open meeting. Was a request in writing submitted 6 days in advance per the policy? What process/policy extends more than 3 minutes for public statement and how does one request it?

Overpayment

Article 3H.

Overpayments of State Funds.

§ 143-64.80. Overpayments of State funds to persons in State-supported positions; recoupment required.

(a) An overpayment of State funds to any person in a State-funded position, whether in the form of salary or otherwise, shall be recouped by the entity that made the overpayment and, to the extent allowed by law, the amount of the overpayment may be offset against the net wages of the person receiving the overpayment.

(b) No State department, agency, or institution, or other State-funded entity may forgive repayment of an overpayment of State funds, but shall have a duty to pursue the repayment of State funds by all lawful means available, including the filing of a civil action in the General Court of Justice. (2003-263, s. 1.)

- Based on the information provided, it appears that when an employee is overpaid, there should be a return of overpayment. How much of the FY23 and FY24 funding has been returned to date and how much is remaining?

Superintendent Local Supplement

Superintendent Salary/Total Compensation

WHEREFORE, The Board and the Superintendent, for and in consideration of the contracts and agreements contained in this Contract Amendment #4 and other good and valuable considerations, now and under this Agreement, do hereby:

1. The term of office for the Superintendent, Section 1 of the Agreement, is hereby extended with the ending date for the Superintendent's term of office extended to read June 30, 2026.
2. Section 4 is hereby amended to provide the Superintendent a pay increase of Thirteen Thousand and No/100 Dollars for a new base annual salary of One Hundred Forty-Eight Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$148,000.00) effective July 1, 2022.

Academy Charter Schools	Public Records Request: 5/21/2023	FY22 Employee Total 11 employees
Superintendent Name	James	James
Superintendent Title	Superintendent	Superintendent
Superintendent Salary	\$ 171,795.28	\$ 171,795.28

* **Question:** Based on the information provided, there appears to be a lack of transparency into the salary (\$148K) + local supplements (3%) for Superintendent and ~\$25K in additional salary provided.

- The Superintendent's Contract and all Amendments are public record. Amounts paid to the Superintendent are public record, as well.
- Current funding for the Superintendent's compensation is 85.53% from state funds and 14.47% from local funds.
- This salary and compensation history are as follows:
 - Original base salary = \$135,00 (included available state funding for salary / longevity / doctoral degree).
 - Superintendent did not receive 3% local supplement.
 - By Amendment effective 1/1/20, Board agreed to pay family health coverage expense as additional compensation. Such reimbursement did not increase his retirement.
 - By Amendment effective 7/1/20, Board agreed extended the contract but did not increase compensation.
 - By Amendment effective 12/8/20, Board agreed to provide the Superintendent with the 3% local supplement as additional compensation.
 - By Amendment effective 7/1/22, Board agreed to increase the Superintendent's base salary by \$13,000 as additional compensation.
 - By Board action effective retroactively back to 1/1/20, the Board clarified that the Superintendent was entitled to his State allotment for longevity as a separate payment from the State consistent with all other eligible ACS employees. The amount in arrears was provided with the Superintendent's June 2023 pay.

Superintendent Local Supplement (cont.)

Full Name	Pay Pd.	Pay Pd Begin Date	Pay Pd End Date	Check Date	Job Description	Full Acct Cod	Total Gross
Brigman, Daniel V	2020 December	2020-12-01	2020-12-09	2020-12-10	LOCAL SUPPLEMENT	2.6940.009.181.810.000.00	\$3,472.88
Brigman, Daniel V	2020 December	2020-12-01	2020-12-09	2020-12-10	LOCAL SUPPLEMENT	2.6940.009.181.810.000.00	\$577.13

- Based on the information provided, it appears that the Superintendent received an out-of-cycle check for 3% local supplement 2 days (12/10/2020) after the signing of the contract amendment (12/8/2020). Why does the data reflect the Local Supplement was provided to the superintendent with respect to the statement made by the BOE attorney on Dec 12, 2023?

Retaliation Policy

To be protected by this policy, employees who report violations or suspected violations must be **acting in good faith based on a reasonable belief** that the reported information represents an unlawful activity, policy, or practice. The protection extends to those employees whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. Further, except as otherwise required by law, the provisions of this policy apply only to those situations in which an employee brings the alleged unlawful activity, policy or practice to the attention of school officials or the board and provides school officials or the board with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. If necessary, school officials or the board may specify reasonable steps to protect the complaining employee from reprisal.

The board reserves the right to discipline employees who know or have reason to believe that the report is inaccurate.

Avery County Schools Policy Code: 1760/7280

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- Based on the information provided, it appears the board reserves the right to discipline based on a report. Can you clarify the statement as it could be interpreted that if someone reports in “good faith”, the board may discipline them.

Training

- **NCASA Conflict of Interest Training Video**
 - **Mandatory for 2023 Appropriations**
 - <https://youtu.be/LMet-cavRNo?feature=shared>